



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

CRETAN EXPEDITION

V.

NOTE ON A MYCENAEAN VASE AND ON SOME GEOMETRIC VASES OF THE SYLLOGOS OF CANDIA

THE material for the study of primitive Cretan ceramics had been until lately very scanty, and, even of the little which had been collected in the Museum of the Syllogos of Candia, a portion still remained completely unknown. The researches of the Archaeological Institute of America came at an opportune moment to lift a part of the veil which covered the history of this earliest period; and the results of the explorations made in several Mycenaean necropoleis of the island, the publication of which will follow in another number of this JOURNAL, will be welcomed by archaeologists, who are expecting from this mysterious land new contributions to the study of the Mycenaean question. While awaiting these results, I willingly accept the invitation of my friend Dr. Halbherr to describe, by some notes, certain pieces examined by him in the Museum of the Syllogos, the greater part of which came not only from well-ascertained localities but from characteristic strata.

MYCENAEAN VASE.

I. A large crater (Figure 1) discovered on the Mycenaean acropolis now called Patéla, near the present village of Priniâs, in the province of Malevisi. It is 0.27 m. high, with a diameter



FIGURE 1.

of 0.25 m. at the mouth. The ornamentation is of an opaque, dull, blackish-brown color; a band of the same color decorates the narrow edge of the vase also, as is shown by the illustration. On one of the bands there are three circles of twelve concentric bands which are joined by two reticulated rhomboids. On the other side (Figure 2) there are two smaller circles joined by a band, terminated above by three parallel lines, and below by a zigzag.

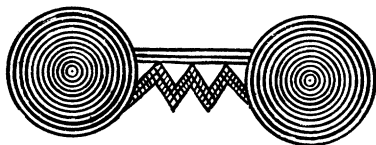


FIGURE 2.

The vase, though Mycenaean in shape, is geometric in design, and should therefore be called a Mycenaean-geometric or

transitional vase. The closest similarity to this type is seen in the following examples: Furtwängler and Löschcke, *Mykenische Vasen*, figs. 237, 241, 242, 276, 306 and 328: *Mykenische Thongefässe*, pl. iv, 17. All these are Mycenaean, so that it might be said that this form is a specialty of the manufacture of Mycenae; but the Cretan example has a foot more pronouncedly conical, and a higher basin, and therefore represents a more developed type. On the other hand, there is an important difference in the decoration. The Mycenaean examples figured as figs. 241 and 242 have the faces decorated by spirals joined by tangents. The reticulated rhomboid is certainly Mycenaean,¹ but in this style the concentric circles, so regular, perfect and numerous in the vase of Priniâs, are, on the other hand, rare, irregular, poorly marked and with few circles (*op. cit.*, figs. 236, 243). Consequently this element may be regarded as rather geometric in style.

The strongly developed form of this example, as compared with those of the acropolis of Mycenae, leads to deductions of a certain importance, if it be true that the examination of types, and the rigorous comparison of forms, together with other exegetical criteria, constitute an element of critical research. I mean to say that if the vase is Mycenaean, and if this form is common in the Mycenaean strata, it is also certain that it is the preliminary propaedeutic type from which the primitive Greek crater is to be developed. In order to be convinced of this it will be sufficient to compare with it the examples given in Murray's *Handbook of Greek Archaeology*, pl. iii, 7 (vase of Aristonophos), and in Conze's *Zur Geschichte der Anfänge griech. Kunst*, pl. x, 3, but especially the strictly geometric examples of the Greek archaic necropolis of Syracuse published by me in the *Notizie degli Scavi* for 1893 (pp. 454-477) and for 1895 (pp. 135-161), which belong to the seventh and in certain cases perhaps to the end of the eighth century B. C. The vertical neck in some of these is hardly suggested; the slightly oblique handles are sometimes devoid of the little band which joins them to the mouth; but the outline, both of the vase and of the foot,

¹ Furtwängler and Löschcke, *Myk. Vas.*, figs. 246, 256.

strongly resembles that of the Mycenaean vases. This conclusion is supported by the fact that this form has been found also in late Mycenaean necropoleis such as Ialysos.¹ The vase of Priniâs is therefore a very late product of Mycenaean art; and it is to be regarded as an example of a type of transition to the Dipylon, especially in its decoration.

VASES OF GEOMETRIC STYLE.

II. This is an ornamental band (Figure 3) which decorates the mouth of a hemispherical bowl with two horizontal annular handles, 0.21 m. high, with a diameter, at the mouth, of 0.26 m. The friezes are brown on a light ground. The frag-



FIGURE 3.

ment comes from the necropolis of Anopolis in the province of Pediada. As far as its form is concerned this vase might, except for its dimensions, be compared to the rudimentary Mycenaean craters of the acropolis of Mycenae mentioned above, which, however, had in every case a base. But the best terms of comparison are always to be found in the succeeding geometric style of which I may cite the following:

1. From Cyprus (Ohnefalsch-Richter, *Kypros, die Bibel und Homer*, pl. 98, 4).

2. From Rhodes (Siana), an example in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford with decorations not only on the shoulders, but on the whole body (Gardner, *Cat. of the Greek Vases in the Ashmolean Museum*, No. 25).

3. Several examples from Greece are known, which are comparable to the present vase not only in form, but also in the arrangement of the design, which is developed on the shoulders with compartments on the faces. I will cite as examples of the

¹ See Furtwängler and Löschcke, *Myk. Vas.*, figs. 4, 31.

Dipylon: a vase at Copenhagen (*Arch. Zeit.* 1885, pl. viii); another which is now at Dresden (*Arch. Anzeiger*, 1892, p. 162); and others at Berlin, Athens and London (cited *ibid.*).

4. From Sicily: two examples from Thapsus in a Siculan tomb, but in the upper stratum separated from the lower very archaic stratum, which is genuinely Siculan, by means of a vacant stratum. As the Siculan tombs of Thapsus have furnished more than twenty Mycenaean vases of the last style, it follows that these vases, which are entirely different both in composition and in style, belong to a different and later period, and are therefore of the geometric Greek pattern (Orsi, *Thapsos*: in the *Monum. Antichi dei Lincei*, VI, pp. 89 ff., pl. iv).

The list just given, although not complete, embraces vases which both in design and form are purely geometric; and such also must be our vase, even if we take into account the circumstance that it comes from the necropolis of Anopolis which has yielded quite a series of Mycenaean vases. However, although the elements and the ornamental composition of the vase, as well as the design of the two ducks on the metopal fields, belong distinctly to the geometric style, the ducks belong also to the very advanced Mycenaean style, where they are characterized, exactly as in our vase, with wings, one of which is extended and marked by vertical lines; they are to be found in a few Mycenaean vases,¹ and also in one of the well-known Cretan funerary urns² where they were painted in the Mycenaean style at a time when it had reached its highest development. This large vase of Anopolis has therefore Mycenaean reminiscences which are utilized in a vessel that is geometric in form and decoration.

III. This is a large cinerary urn (Figure 4, *a, b, c*) a *bottino* with a cover, and with four handles on its shoulders, two of which are formed of an arch or bridge in their lower part. It is 0.40 m. high, with a maximum width of 0.355 m. Its

¹ Furtwängler and Löschcke, *Myk. Vas.*, fig. 398 from Mycenae, fig. 63 from Ialysos.

² *Monum. Antichi*, I, part 2, p. 212, pl. i, 3.

decoration, which is brown in color, consists of the following elements. Between the handles are four ornamented rectangles or compartments: the first (*a*) has three bands: a scorpion and two animals *en face* rudely represented, two maeanders, and in the lower left-hand corner a toad (?); the second (*b*) also has three bands with three checker-boards in the upper part, striated rhomboids in the centre, and a maeander below; the third (*c*) has four bands with rhomboids, schematic *regardant* heads of animals like ox-heads, and lozenges; the fourth has maeanders, lozenges and zigzags. The flat portion of the handles is also decorated with narrow horizontal lines and with a scorpion. The cover, with its brown background, is in the form of a *calotte* decorated with a rosette. It does not fit the

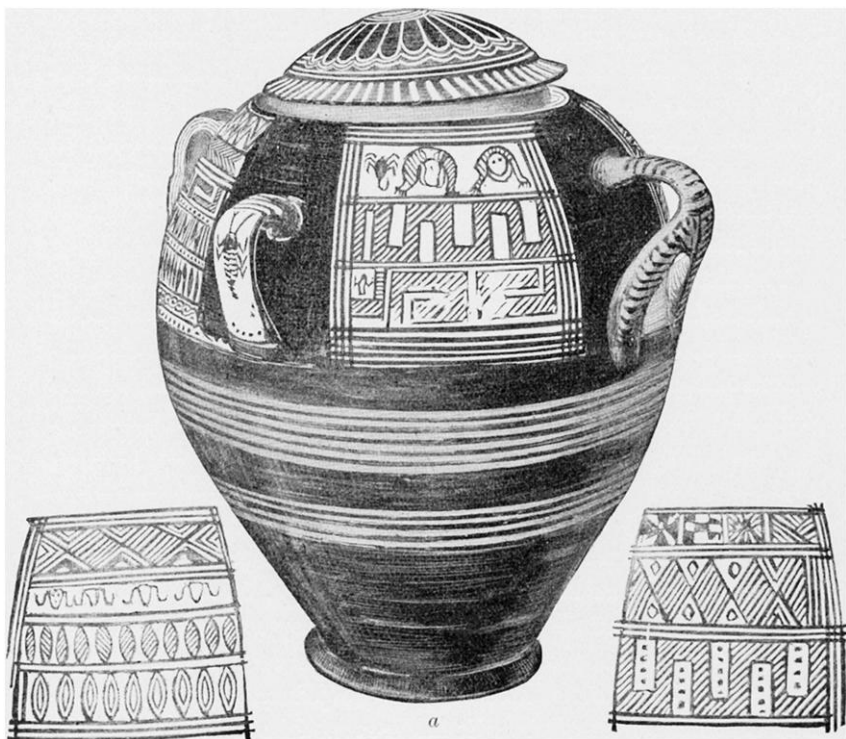


FIGURE 4.

and in the lower left-hand corner a toad (?); the second (*b*) also has three bands with three checker-boards in the upper part, striated rhomboids in the centre, and a maeander below; the third (*c*) has four bands with rhomboids, schematic *regardant* heads of animals like ox-heads, and lozenges; the fourth has maeanders, lozenges and zigzags. The flat portion of the handles is also decorated with narrow horizontal lines and with a scorpion. The cover, with its brown background, is in the form of a *calotte* decorated with a rosette. It does not fit the

vase and seems to have belonged to another similar ossuary. The vase comes from Cnossos. In regard to its contents, Dr. Hazzidaki has courteously informed me that these consisted of a quantity of minute burned bones, among which was a polycuspid molar tooth, much injured by fire. All the rest of the bones, according to two other physicians, were human, as is confirmed by the presence of the tooth. The Syllogos possesses three other ossuaries beside this one. One is from the necropolis of Anopolis and two from that of Stavrakia: all of them contained burned bones. In that of Anopolis there were found fragments of an upper and lower human jaw with a few teeth.

The shape of the vase and of the handles, the arrangement of the design in rectangles on the shoulder, and the character of the design itself, are all points characteristic of the geometric style and period. As for the form, notwithstanding the scarcity of systematic explorations in the island, it seems certain, on account of the simultaneous presence of similar vases at Cnossos, Anopolis and Stavrakia, that this is a local Cretan form. Nothing similar exists in the Mycenaean style, and outside of the island I can cite only a single vase¹ very similar to this, but without cover; the annular handles, arched and bridged, are characteristic of some Greek vase-forms of the seventh century.

Passing from the form to the design, we note particularly the tendency—peculiar to pottery of the Dipylon and cognate works—to decorate the shoulders with compartments divided into bands and fields. In regard to details there is no need to add that the angular maeander is a characteristic of this style,² to which also belong the rhomboids and the checker-pattern.³ Lozenges are a rare pattern, but are to be found in the geometric vases of Cyprus and elsewhere.⁴ I do not know of any other instances of the scorpion in primitive vase-paintings, and can bring forward only an unedited *pastiglia* from

¹ Conze, *Anfänge der griech. Kunst*, pl. x, 2.

² Graef, *Vasenfunde von der Akropolis zu Athen*, in the *Sitzungsb. d. arch. Gesell. zu Berlin*, 1892, No. 13, p. 42.

³ Baumeister, *Denkmäler*, fig. 2068; Conze, *op. cit.*, pl. v, 4, 9.

⁴ Collignon, *Céramique grecque*, fig. 18; Conze, *op. cit.*, pl. v, 5.

Megara, of the close of the seventh century, in the Museum of Syracuse, on which this animal is represented. It is certain that from an early period magical qualities and superstitious notions were connected with the scorpion.¹ The rosette on the cover is also one of those decorative elements belonging to the Mycenaean style in places where it was most popular,² and it passes with the same popularity to the vases and more rarely to the bronzes of the Dipylon period. Such are the geometric vases, mainly Cypriote, illustrated in Perrot, *La Phénicie*, fig. 523; the fibula in the *Arch. Anzeiger*, 1894, p. 116; the bracelets in the *Ἐφημερίς Ἀρχαιολογική*, 1892, pls. x, 2-4, xii, 3-4, p. 238.

IV. Ornamental detail (Figure 5) of a very bulging vase, which from its shape might be called a genuine *stamnos*, with two double annular handles; the decorations of the opposite side are in a bad state of preservation. The vase is from the necropolis of Anopolis (province of Pediada), and like the necropolis it belongs to the geometric period.

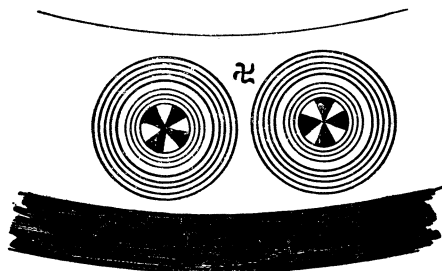


FIGURE 5.

To the geometric period belong the concentric circles, especially in Cypriote ware,³ also the equilateral crosses which, however, are rare.⁴ Less rare, on the other hand, is the *crux gamata*,

¹ Pauly-Wissowa, *Real-Encyclopädie der class. Alterthumswiss.*, I, 79.

² As in the wall-paintings of Tiryns, ceilings of Orchomenos, tomb-gate of Mycenae, gold and ivory rosettes of Spata and Palamidi.

³ *E. g.*, Ohnefalsch-Richter, *Kypros*, pl. 216; and also in that of other regions, *e. g.*, Conze, *op. cit.*, pl. x, 4, 2.

⁴ On a Cretan urn of advanced Mycenaean style is an equilateral cross inscribed in spiral; see Orsi, *Urne Cretesi*, pl. i, 2. On a Rhodian vase are concentric circles having in their centre Maltese crosses; cf. *Jahrbuch d. Arch. Inst.*, 1886, p. 135.

which already appears in the largest Dipylon vase,¹ in the pyxis in the same necropolis,² and elsewhere.³ This cross becomes very common in the Rhodian vases, and certainly represents one of the genuinely oriental elements of this period, for it is quite exceptional in the Mycenaean style.⁴

V. An ornament from the shoulder of an amphora used as an ossuary (Figure 6); on the opposite side from the shoulder

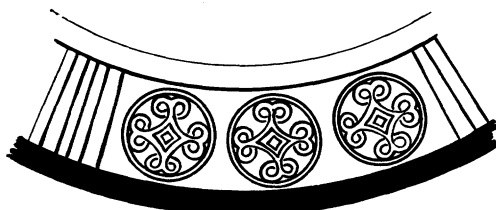


FIGURE 6.

are four other circles, the two in the centre having the same motive as that on the front, while the two side-circles have the equilateral cross as in vase No. IV. The rest of the body of the vase is decorated with parallel bands and a row of concentric circles. It is from Stavrakia. The design inscribed on the circles may result from the union of *phytomorphous* Mycenaean elements geometricized.⁵ It can, however, also be purely geometric. A lozenge with four arms ending in a double spiral, almost identical with the motive on this vase from Stavrakia, is found, in fact, on a vase from Mycenae;⁶ and certain elements of it are found on the gold buttons of the acropolis of Mycenae. Finally, one of the funerary stelae of these tombs⁷ has the same motive, but tripartite instead of quadrupartite, inscribed in a circle. Notwithstanding these similarities of style, I believe that this vase, on account of its origin, is geometric rather than

¹ Collignon, *op. cit.*, pl. i.

² Collignon, *op. cit.*, fig. 21.

³ Conze, *op. cit.*, pls. iv. b, v. 4, vi. 1, etc.

⁴ Beside the Cretan urn already mentioned, the only example, and a doubtful one at that, is in Furtwängler and Löschcke, *Myk. Vas.*, No. 136.

⁵ Furtwängler and Löschcke, *Myk. Vas.*, fig. 28.

⁶ *Myk. Vas.*, fig. 377.

⁷ Perrot, *La Grèce primitive*, fig. 362.

Mycenaean. As a matter of fact a motive very similar, but very fully developed, is found on the large amphora from Melos.¹

VI. The decoration on this little cover of an ossuary (Figure 7) is very graceful. It comes from the necropolis of Anopolis and is now in the Syllogos collection. This decoration consists



FIGURE 7.

of two equilateral crosses placed one above the other with geometric motives inscribed on their arms (such as the gridiron, zigzags, and lozenges), while between the arms of the larger cross is a double affronted spiral, which is essentially a Mycenaean element, although it passed also into the geometric style.² The form of the cover indicates that the vase was an ossuary not unlike that of Cnossos; for this reason, and because the objects from Anopolis are all geometric, and also because the rite of incineration was there in use, it clearly follows that this cover belongs to the geometric style although it has so many reminiscences of the Mycenaean period.

VII. A cover of an ossuary from Cnossos (Figure 8) similar to the preceding and with a handle. It is decorated with black-brown friezes on a light ground. The ornamentation is

¹ Collignon, *op. cit.*, pl. ii.

² Gold object from Troy (Schliemann, *Ilios*, fig. 998); at Mycenae on the stelae of the acropolis, and in small works of industrial art. For the entire class see my review in the *Bullettino di Paletnologia Italiana*, 1892, p. 70, note 37, in connection with the same motive carved in *chiusini* of very ancient Siculan tombs.

geometric, with traces of the Mycenaean style in the central

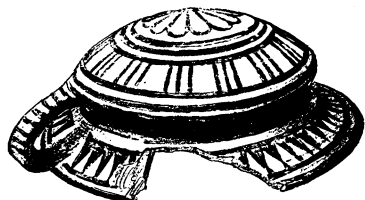


FIGURE 8.

rosette. Other ossuaries of the Syllogos collection have analogous covers.

VIII. Fragment of a flat dish (Figure 9) decorated with rosettes in relief; 0.27 m. in diameter; from Cnossos. It must

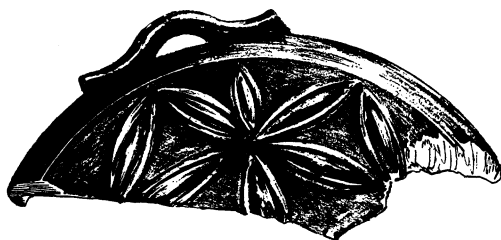


FIGURE 9.

have served as the cover of an ossuary, for the Syllogos collection has others of the same kind placed over ossuaries from Anopolis. The decoration in relief should be compared with the fragments of Cretan vases published by Fabricius¹ and by Mariani,² and with others which will be published in this JOURNAL for the first time by Dr. Halbherr. The form of the handles occurs in vases of the seventh and sixth centuries.

IX. Cover of a vase (Figure 10), probably an ossuary, of conical shape, ending in a horse-head, with mane cut *a spatola*, with ears erect, very protruding eyes, and open nostrils. The ornamentation is in brown on a black ground. On the two opposite sides of the lower edge of the vase are a couple of holes which served to fasten the cover to the vase by metal

¹ *Athen. Mitth.*, 1886, pl. iv, p. 144.

² *Di un'antica città scoperta in Creta*, pl. ii, 16, 22.

wires. Its height is 0.195 m. and its diameter 0.18 m. It is of uncertain origin. The form of the cover is entirely new, and I am not able to find anything with which to compare it; but its ornamentation is very well known and is characteristic of the geometric style. That in the geometric period potters began to give plastic form to animal figures and especially to



FIGURE 10.

horses, making use of them as vase-handles, is proved by several pyxides and vases of the Dipylon style.

X. Of this tendency to give plastic form to the extremities of vases we have another example (Figure 11) in this pitcher, the mouth of which is shaped like a human head, with large and wide ears, wide-open eyes formed of a large projecting bulb with a dot in the centre, a small open mouth, and a little beard on the chin, while all the rest of the face is smooth. It is fifteen centimetres high, and was found inside ossuary

¹ Masner, *Vasensammlung im k. Oest. Mus.*, No. 81; *Mon. dell' Istituto*, IX, pl. 40, fig. 2 a; *Athen. Mitth.*, 1893, p. 138.

No. III. As to form this is a novelty. Its decoration, however, is geometric, although the interrupted spiral is to be found also in the Mycenaean style¹ which does not, on the other hand, use the maeander.



FIGURE 11.

The few vases here illustrated are not without value for the primitive history of Crete, but the lack of data as to the contents of the necropoleis from which they come prescribes great caution in pronouncing any opinion. We may, however, venture to believe that through them our knowledge of Proto-Hellenic Crete is somewhat increased. The Mycenaean material from this island, although out of proportion to the importance of the region, will be found to be of exceeding interest when all the late discoveries of Taramelli, Mariani, and Halbherr shall have been published; but of the period immediately following the Mycenaean, at the very dawn of the historical period, almost nothing was known. Now, however, it is evident that at Cnossos, Anopolis, and Stavrakia there were

¹ *Myk. Vas.*, fig. 131, from Alikí; figs. 338 and 339, from Mycenae.

necropoleis for incineration with vases painted in a geometric style, which bear many analogies to those of Cyprus and the Dipylon, but contain many reminiscences of the Mycenaean style—some of them having a form peculiar to the island. In regard to the rite, it is known that during the Dipylon period burial was preferred to incineration; that, in fact, according to the last careful observations of Brückner and Pernice, cremation was represented by a very small percentage. In the only other Greek necropolis of the geometric period which has thus far been carefully explored, that of Eleusis, incineration is quite exceptional. We must therefore believe that, in funeral rites, different ideas governed in Crete at the same time, because in the Museum of the Syllogos the ossuaries from the three necropoleis mentioned above are quite numerous. However, nothing definite can be affirmed regarding the proportion between incineration and burial, through lack of information; it is certain only that the proportion of the former could not possibly have been as small as at the Dipylon and at Eleusis. A case very analogous to this is the very early necropolis of Halicarnassus (Dümmler, *Athen. Mitth.* XIII, p. 276) of the geometric period, where incineration was rigorously observed. The Cretan necropoleis have this also in common with that of Halicarnassus, that the vase-material has many reminiscences of the Mycenaean style,—reminiscences which notwithstanding their substantial differences had been already observed.

In Crete the Mycenaean necropoleis were, as elsewhere, all used for inhumation, and the funerary urns themselves, a specialty of the island, were used for the reception of bodies already turned into skeletons or perhaps, also, of doubled-up bodies. The necropoleis of Cnossos, Anopolis and Stavrakia, nearer than the Dipylon to the Homeric rite of *καῖσις*, are to be distinguished from the Mycenaean, at least in regard to age; it still remains to be seen whether they should be distinguished also in regard to race. Cnossos, Anopolis and Stavrakia belong to the Hellenic population of the ninth and eighth centuries. However, the mutual relations between the geometric and Mycenaean periods and the ethnical corollaries that ensue for

Crete require, in order to be exactly determined, long and careful preparatory researches both in necropoleis and in the cities. This study is also necessary for the solution of another question: that is, what are the specific characteristics of the Cretan geometric style; what are its points of contact with the Cypriote; and was it a new importation from the continent or an evolution from the preceding native culture under the action of foreign factors? This question is therefore connected with that of the famous passage in the *Odyssey* (τ 175 ff.); that is, to which of the families—Dorian, Achæan or Pelasgian—do our necropoleis belong: to the Dorians who came in at a later date, or to the earlier Achæans and Pelasgians? Finally, the question arises whether the change of form and rite took place here less violently than elsewhere. All these are problems that cannot yet be answered. What cannot be settled through the well-known literary sources we may hope to learn from the study of the subsoil of Crete. It is the ardent desire of all lovers of antiquity, since the promising discoveries of the American expedition, that this should take place as soon as possible.

SYRACUSE, SICILY.
January, 1896.

PAOLO ORSI.